

Policy Recommendations

With women population that was almost as big as that of men, women's needs and interests must be represented in the policy-making process. Not only are women big in number, but also in their participation in the General Election. However, the number of women members of the House of Representatives is quite small. The recommendations that can be given to the political and public life of women are as follows:

- ◆ Encourage open access, participation, control, and benefits of women in public and political life, particularly in legislative election process. Political parties as participants of the General Election are potential place in producing women leaders. Political parties also play a role in disseminating political education with gender perspective to the society. Political parties need to use the momentum of preparation for the General Election 2014 to provide political education for women voters.
- ◆ Political parties may work with women's organizations at the grassroots level in conducting political education using gender perspective for the public. This provides benefits to both sides in mapping problem and providing appropriate recommendations for the community, as well as screening potential women candidates. With regards to the coming General Election 2014, political parties need to urge their candidate to integrate a gender perspective in every campaign.
- ◆ The House of Representatives need to add rules in their Code of Conduct about women's representation as leaders, as well as the appointment of women as members in each commission and other existing complimentary entities of the House of Representatives.
- ◆ Women members of the House of Representatives needs to work together with civil society organizations, especially women's organizations at the grassroots level, so a strong collaborative effort is develop to maximize women's representative function. This cooperation can be done while performing aspiration in each electoral district.

End notes

- ¹ Taken from the site of the Central Bureau of Statistics website, http://bps.go.id/tab_sub/view.php?kat=1&tabel=1&daftar=1&id_subyek=40¬ab=4, accessed, July 22nd, 2013.
- ² Maternal Mortality Rate based on by Indonesian Demographic and Health Survey 2007 there were 228 deaths per 100,000 live births.
- ³ Mujani, Liddle, Ambardi. *Kuasa Rakyat: Analisis tentang Perilaku Memilih dalam Pemilihan Legislatif dan Presiden Indonesia Pasca-Orde Baru*. Mizan Publika. Jakarta: Juni 2012.
- ⁴ *Ibid.*
- ⁵ Processed from website DPR-RI, http://www.dpr.go.id/id/anggota/per_komisi, accessed on July 22nd, 2013.

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Women's Political Participation

At the momentum of 15 years after the reformation, the struggles of Indonesian women in formal politics had contributed significantly to the development of democracy in Indonesia. Women's political participation and representation discourse showed that gender equality and equity had increased in quantitative term. Yet, the practice of policy making in the House of Representatives do not showed significant achievement.

Since August 2012 Women Research Institute (WRI) had conducted policy researches on women members of the House of Representatives and gender equality policy. This policy brief is part of the research aiming to uncover issues and recommendations on the women's participation and representation in politics.

The Situation of Women's Participation in Politics

First, women's representation in the House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia is only 18 percent, much lower than the proportion of women which covers 49.66 percent of the total population of Indonesia (237.641.326 people according to the 2010 Population Census conducted by the Central Statistics Bureau (BPS). A gender-based segregation data on population showed that there were 119,630,913 men and 118,010,413 women in Indonesia.

Second, given the low participation of women in politics (and other areas of life) is a structural problem, the low representation of women in politics is due to the absence of affirmative policy that ensures women's participation and access in political life.

Why Women Need Politics?

1. Women Are Still Marginalized

The data published by the Central Statistics Bureau in 2009, showed that 70 percent of 32.35 million poor people in Indonesia were women. The number of women who became bread-winners increased from 2009 to 2011 and this increase occurred in the rural areas.

Policy Brief

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Table 1.
Percentage of Households by Province, Area of Residence and Gender of Household Heads 2009-2011¹

Urban						Rural						Urban + Rural					
Men			Women			Men			Women			Men			Women		
2009	2010	2011	2009	2010	2011	2009	2010	2011	2009	2010	2011	2009	2010	2011	2009	2010	2011
85.11	85.61	85.00	14.89	14.39	15.00	86.51	86.56	86.40	13.49	13.44	13.60	85.83	86.09	85.71	14.17	13.91	14.29

Women and poverty remain a problem and still remain unresolved, even almost until the end of the MDGs. This is getting worse due to women's poor access to education and health services. High Maternal Mortality Rate shows that women are still marginalized. Therefore, the importance of women's involvement in policy decision making process is inescapable.

2. Women's Participation versus Women's Political Representation

There were number of studies which suggested that women participation in politics were lower than men (Mujani, Liddle, Ambardi; 2012), particularly in the public sphere. In society there was a notion that perceived men as more active in politics than women. An equal participation between women and men only happened on legislative candidate selection, while women's participation was very minimum during the campaign period in public sphere.

Based on the level of participation in the General Election and campaign, this difference was not just due to gender differences

According to Burnes, Verba, Schlozman (in Mujani, Liddle, Ambardi; 2012)⁴ the cause of these differences in participation of women and men in politics were:

- ♦ Women tended to have lower level of education
- ♦ Women were less likely to get an opportunity to be active in the public
- ♦ Women got less opportunities for work
- ♦ Women tended to become second-class citizens

Figure 1.
Voters' Participation in Legislative Elections 1999-2009
Based on Gender²

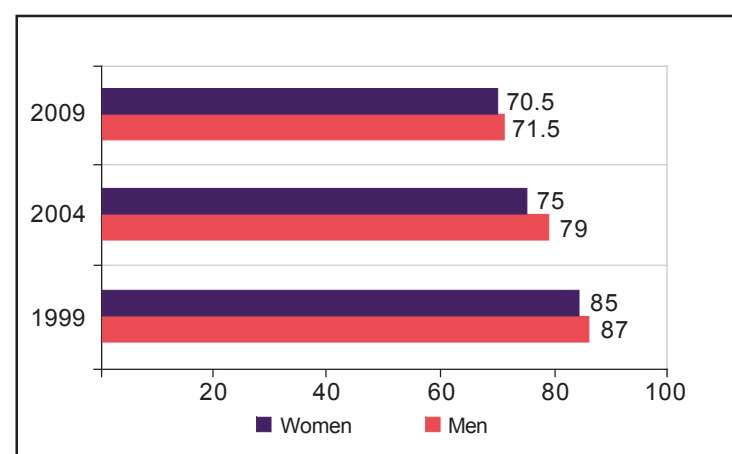
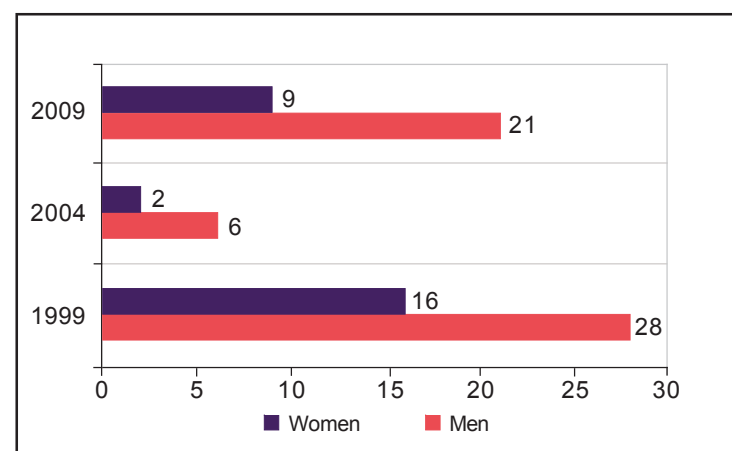


Figure 2.
Campaign in Legislative Elections 1999-2009
Based on Gender³



Repro: kompas.com

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In regards to the issue of representation, the General Election 2009 showed an increasing number of women members of the House compared to that in 2004 (from

11.09 percent to 18.04 percent). When it was compared to the number of voters in the General Election 2009, from 104,099,785 valid votes, 22.45 percent (16,134,959) was given to women candidates and 77.54 percent (55,730,151) was given to men candidates. The fact showed that the number of both men and women voters in the General Election 2009 was almost the same.

After they were elected, women members of the House of Representatives only placed at the commission that was considered women friendly, thus the distribution of women members in the existing commission became uneven. This condition also occurred in other tools of the House of Representatives. Most women were positioned in Commission IX (Employment, Population and Health) and Commission X (Education, Culture, Tourism, Youth and Sports). Meanwhile, the least number was in Commission III (Law, Human Rights and Security). This occurred because of the lacking regulating policies. In the Rules of Conduct of the House of Representatives, the regulation of women's representation was only mentioned in the procedures of electing a leader of each tool of the House of Representatives.

Figure 3.
Gender Distribution in the Commission in the House of Representatives⁵

